

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of the present application. The Office Action, however, tentatively rejected all claims 1-20. In response, independent claims 1 and 11 (as well as dependent claims 2-6) have been amended to more particularly define certain aspects of the claimed embodiments. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added to the application by these amendments.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C 112

The Office Action rejected to claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. In the application, the term “compression/encryption” in the image compression/encryption device is only a name for processing the image into a protected image. In the claims, the image compression/encryption device is amended as the first image device. Additionally, the image recovery device is amended as the second image device. As amended, the claims overcome the rejections and the rejections should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C 103(a)

Independent claims 1 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Dorrel et al. (US 2003/0123701) hereinafter Dorrell and further in view of Weller (US 2005/0055464). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, because Dorrel and Weller do not teach or suggest what the Office Action alleges that they teach. Dorrel and Weller fail to disclose, suggest, or

teach, *inter alia*, the following feature recited by claims 1 and 11 of the present application:

“separating an image into base image data and auxiliary image data ***according to a compression technique, wherein the base image data and the auxiliary image data respectively comprise a part of image contents comprising pixel values of the image***”;
“encrypting the auxiliary image data to an auxiliary image data cipher”;
and
“composing the compressed base image data and the *auxiliary image data cipher* into a protected image corresponding to the image”.

In paragraph [0056] of the Dorrell reference, the metadata is acquisition metadata. The acquisition metadata includes intellectual property rights information (e.g. copyright labeling), which is used to identify the party or parties having intellectual property rights in the image. The acquisition metadata can also include a date, time, flash status and/or focus setting. In The metadata is a terminology, which facilitates the understanding, use and management of data. In the image related art, metadata would typically include the date an image was taken and details of the camera settings. Further, the intellectual property rights information and/or authorization information can be also included in the metadata. Further, a header may be a compact label for an image file. The header identifies the encoding standard of the image file, specifies the length of the image file, indicates whether a readable descriptor is included, permits random interception of data stream, and offers optional error protection.

In the present application, however, the image is divided into base image data and auxiliary image data, ***wherein the base image data and the auxiliary image data respectively comprise a part of image contents comprising pixel values of the image*** (supported by Figs. 4A, 4B and 4C and related descriptions of the specification).

The auxiliary image data is not metadata, nor can it properly be equated to the metadata disclosed in the Dorrell reference, or the header disclosed in in the Weller reference.

Additionally, the image is divided into base image data and auxiliary image data ***according to a compression technique***. The compression technique, for example, may be region of interest (ROI), resolution and quality compression techniques. There is simply no teaching in Dorrell or Weller that the image is divided according to a compression technique.

It will be understood by persons skilled in the art that, in the present application, an image is divided into two parts according to a compression technique. One or both of the image parts are encrypted using the compression technique. ***One image part is then encrypted to a cipher, and the another one is not encrypted. The cipher and the unencrypted image part are composed to generate a protected image***. After the compression and composition, for example, users can view an image without a protected portion after ROI compression, users can view a thumbnail of an image after resolution compression, and users can view a blurred image after quality compression. The objective of the application is very different from that of the Dorrell reference, and no where in Dorrell or Weller reference does it disclose the claimed features.

Since Dorrell and Weller fail to teach the claimed features (emphasized above) of the claimed embodiments, independent claims 1 and 11 are patentable over the cited art. Insofar as claims 2-10 depend from claim 1, and claims 12-20 depend from claim 11, these claims patently define over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this amendment and response to Office Action. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

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